



News Release

WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

More than 6,650 National Guard soldiers and airmen still available in Wisconsin

Even after the mobilization of nearly 370 members of the Wisconsin National Guard in the past two weeks, there are still more than 6,650 soldiers and airmen in the Wisconsin Guard who are available in the event of state emergencies or to support homeland defense or security missions.

The Wisconsin National Guard has been actively involved in the global war on terror since the morning of September 11, 2001. Since that time, about 80 percent of the Guard's soldiers and airmen have served on active duty either at home or overseas. Most of these 7,500-plus soldiers and airmen have completed their active duty missions and are back in Wisconsin serving with their Army and Air National Guard units.

Wisconsin's available resources include a 500-soldier Rapid Reaction Force, which is capable of responding on short notice anywhere in Wisconsin with an initial force of 125 soldiers, and 375 additional soldiers available within 24 hours to sustain operations as long as required.

Wisconsin also has a special unit whose 22 highly skilled, full-time members of the Army and Air National Guard are federally resourced, trained and evaluated, but fall under the command and control of the governor of Wisconsin. The 54th Civil Support Team is designed to deploy rapidly to assist local first responders in determining the nature of a weapons of mass destruction incident, provide medical and technical advice, and pave the way for the identification and arrival of follow-on state and federal response assets. The 54th CST was officially certified by the Defense Department in February 2006 and is fully trained, equipped and ready to respond to incidents anywhere in Wisconsin.

There are now about 2,800 Wisconsin National Guard members serving on active duty for federal missions. About 2,170 Wisconsin Guard soldiers and airmen are currently deployed overseas, and overseas duty awaits 600 soldiers who are currently training at Army mobilization centers in Mississippi and Indiana. The Guard's remaining soldiers and airmen are available in Wisconsin and are fully capable of responding to homeland security or defense missions anywhere in the state.

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